

NSC BRIEFING

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SOUTH KOREAN ELECTIONS

- I. Elections for national assembly will be held on Friday. They will not affect position Rhee who has two more years in office.
  - A. Both pro-Rhee Liberal Party and opposition Democratic Party are conservative and favor the nation's alignment with US.
  - B. Any leftist participation in election will be via independent candidates.
  - C. Election appears to be continuing trend toward two-party system. Fewer minor parties and independent candidates are running and not many expected to win.
- II. Democrats attacking Liberals on issues of government corruption and Rhee's unification policy.
  - A. Democrats recently rejected unification by unilateral South Korean military action, which Rhee strongly advocates, and declared support for UN supervised elections in both North and South Korea.
  - B. Presidential succession also underlying issue; if Liberals win a two-thirds majority they are likely to amend the Constitution to prevent opposition Vice President Chang Myon from succeeding to presidency.
- III. Most political observers in Seoul believe the Liberals will win majority in 233-seat assembly.
  - A. Liberal chances could be hurt by large number of Liberals who failed to get party's nomination and are running as independents. This threat offset since unauthorized candidates who win probably will join party ranks in Assembly.